

Key Things You Need To Know About New PSLE Scoring System

2021 marks the commencement of the new PSLE scoring system. Instead of receiving a T-score, students will be graded based on the Achievement Level (AL) system.

What is the difference between the T-score and AL system?

In previous years, the raw score for each subject attained by a student was converted to a T-score using a formula. This conversion revealed how well the student did in relation to the rest of the cohort. However, under the new AL system, students' raw scores will not be adjusted. Instead, they will be awarded an achievement level for each subject based on their raw score, and their total score for PSLE will be the sum of AL scores for all four subjects. The AL system ranges from 4 to 32 points, with 4 points being the best score that a student can attain. There are 8 achievement level bands, as seen in the table below:

Achievement Level (AL)	Raw Mark range
1	>90
2	85-89
3	80-84
4	75-79
5	65-74
6	45-64
7	20-44
8	<20

How does this impact the chances of your child getting into their ideal school and stream?

First, let us look at the PSLE score needed to qualify for each stream in secondary school:

Express: 4 to 20

Express or Normal Academic: 21 to 22

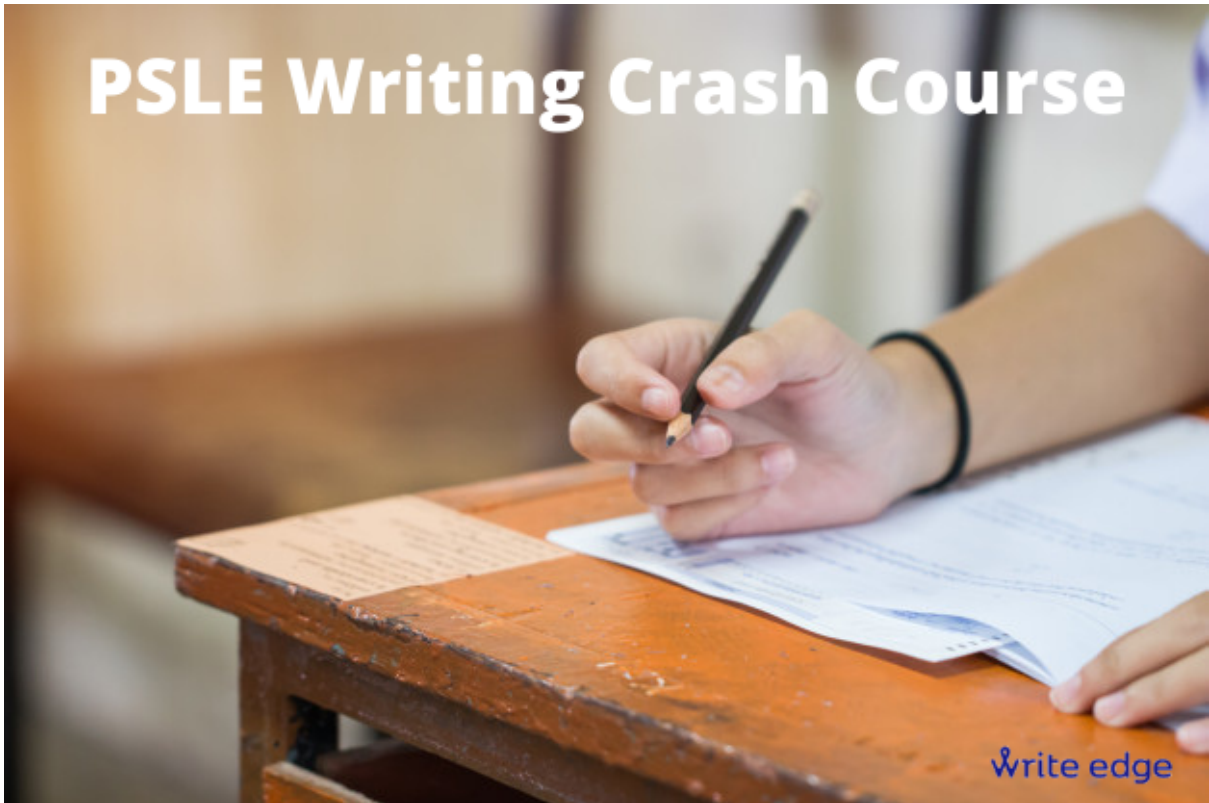
Normal Academic: 23 to 24

Normal Academic or Normal Technical: 25

Normal Technical: 26 to 30 (with AL 7 or better in both English and Mathematics)

Scores that students receive under the AL system are less finely differentiated. This means that many schools would have the same cut-off point, which may translate into a wider range of schools for your child to choose from. On the flipside, this could also mean that many students would receive the same AL score and may be competing for the schools within a similar range.

PSLE Writing Crash Course



In the event that there are students with the same score vying for the last spot in the school, the tie-breaker will be determined by your child's citizenship, choice order of school, followed by computerised balloting. As such, in order for your child to have more options and safely get into the school of their choice, it would be best to aim for an AL score that is as low as possible.

One concern that many parents have is that it might be more difficult for students to get into the express stream. However, the Ministry of Education has emphasised that this would not be the case. Considering that the curriculum and rigour of the tests administered remain the status quo, it is expected that the proportion of students who qualify for each stream would be similar to past years.

How will this new system affect the English paper?

As mentioned, the new grading system brings no change to the content and structure of the examinations. However, under this new scoring system, students would not be able to rely on their stronger subjects to 'compensate' for the weaker scores in other subjects. To help your child ace their English exam and get into their dream school, it is essential that they are able to apply the relevant skills that are tested.

How can students prepare for their PSLE English exam?

An effective way to kickstart your child's revision would be to tackle [PSLE composition topics](#). PSLE composition topics assess students on their ability to generate, organise and convey ideas with coherence, appropriate tone, grammatical accuracy and vocabulary proficiency. While the English exam is separated into different papers, the skills required in paper 1 are the foundation of language mastery. Honing these key skills first makes preparing for the other components of the English exam to be a less arduous process.



For instance, the first step when approaching PSLE composition topics is to analyse the topic, which can be fairly abstract at primary 6. Students need to discern the implicit specifications of the question and envision how they can link a picture to the topic logically before they are able to generate a plot that flows coherently. Preparing for the paper 1 exam develops students' logical thinking and inference skills, which can aid them tremendously in their paper 2. Our PSLE writing crash course teaches students examination skills that help them tackle any PSLE composition topic and improve their language mastery.

Being proficient at generating ideas for compositions also gives students immense help with their oral exam. Many students find it intimidating to have to come up with a well-developed answer for the conversation component. As students are encouraged to tap into their personal experiences to answer the questions, they can score well by being able to convey an anecdote that is meaningful to them. Composition writing trains students to be adept at thinking up well-elaborated stories, so that they could think quickly on their feet and articulate their answers fluently.

Our PSLE writing crash course teaches effective examination skills and the knowledge required to apply these skills in the exam. Sign up for Write Edge's [PSLE writing crash course](https://www.write-edge.com/) to boost your child's chances of getting into the school they deserve.

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